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ABSTRACT

There are discrepancies between the aptitude test scores of Asian and Pacific Americans and their academic and employment achievement. Asian Pacific Americans do better in school than their test scores predict, but have lower level jobs and income than predicted. These students perform above average in mathematics and science and below average in subjects that require communication skills. This fact accounts for the tendency of Asian/Pacific Americans to choose engineering, computer sciences, and economics as career areas. Yet, they are hindered in the job market by their lack of communication skills. Asian/Pacific Americans must work to balance their educational achievement and must work together, rather than compete among themselves, for better representation in all careers. (APM)

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TESTING AND ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICANS

PRESENTED AT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICAN EDUCATION (NAAPAE)

HONOLULU, HAWAII

APRIL 23, 1981

BY

JAYJIA HSIA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Jayjia Hsia

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

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My fellow Asian and Pacific Americans, and friends who are here because of their interest in A/PA education: It is a rare privilege for me to share with all of you a few ideas on the testing of Asian and Pacific Americans and how testing relates to our conference theme of Education and Change.

Today, I speak for myself alone, and not as a representative of any particular organization or special interest group.

America is an open and competitive society, where we begin competing practically from the cradle — the most beautiful baby, Little League, music and dance auditions, juried art shows, homecoming queen, school president, Olympic trials, Nielsen ratings, batting averages ... you name it, and there are contests for it.

ACADEMIC TESTING IS ONE OF THOSE COMPETITIVE SITUATIONS WHICH IS VERY MUCH IN THE NEWS. PEOPLE ARE SAYING THAT TOO MANY DECISIONS ARE BASED ON TEST SCORES -- READING READINESS TEST SCORES DETERMINE WHETHER A SIX YEAR OLD IS PUT WITH THE BLUEBIRD OR THE CARDINAL READING GROUPS. CARDINALS ARE MOVED ALONG QUICKLY, AND GET PRAISED IN THEIR REPORT CARDS. CARDINALS GO ON TO THE GREAT BOOKS, ACCELERATED MATH AND AP PHYSICS.

IN DUE COURSE, CARDINALS ENROLL IN HIGHLY SELECTIVE COLLEGES, AND MAYBE GO ON TO WIN GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREES AND A FIRST CLASS TICKET TO THE GOOD LIFE. A CLASSIC AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY, RIGHT? WELL, NO, NOT QUITE, NOT WHEN WE ARE TALKING ABOUT MANY A/PAs.

HERE ARE THE FACTS. A/PAs GENERALLY PERFORM WELL IN COGNITIVE TESTS -- INTELLIGENCE, APTITUDE, AND ACHIEVEMENT TESTS. THE TESTS ARE GOOD PREDICTORS OF THEIR LATER PERFORMANCE IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS.

BARRING SUCH EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AS CULTURE SHOCK OF RECENT ARRIVALS, POOR GRASP OF ENGLISH, OR ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGES FAMILIES, ASIAN AMERICANS ALSO DO QUITE WELL IN SCHOOL. BUT THERE ARE SOME DIFFERENCES IN AVERAGE ACHIEVEMENT AMONG VARIOUS A/PA SUBGROUPS. FURTHERMORE, SUCCESSIVE COHORTS OF A/PAS ARE REPORTING MORE YEARS SPENT IN FORMAL SCHOOLING AND HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS. ALL EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS SHOW A/PAS TO BE DOING WELL.

LABOR MARKET INDICATORS, HOWEVER, DO NOT SEEM TO FULLY OR CONSISTENTLY REFLECT THE OPTIMISTIC TREND OF IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR A/PAS. LET'S TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT A/PA PERFORMANCE ON DIFFERENT KINDS OF COGNITIVE TESTS -- AS WELL AS MOTIVATIONAL AND AFFECTIVE CORRELATES OF TEST SCORES. WE WILL ALSO LOOK AT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF A/PAS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHOICES OF CAREERS AND PROGRESS ON THE JOB.

WE WILL BEGIN WITH A/PA PERFORMANCE ON INTELLIGENCE AND APTITUDE TESTS, GO ON TO THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS AND LOOK FOR FACTORS WHICH RELATE TO DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT. WE'LL END WITH A FEW OBSERVATIONS ON HOW LATER WORK EXPERIENCES SEEM TO RELATE TO EARLIER SCORES IN APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO MAXIMIZE A/PA POTENTIAL IN SCHOOL AND LATER AT WORK.

THE RELATIONSHIPS ARE COMPLEX, AND WE CAN ONLY MAKE SOME INFORMED GUESSES AS TO EXACTLY HOW TEST SCORES AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT RELATE TO A/PA EXPERIENCES IN CHOOSING A JOB AND GETTING ON IN A CAREER.

ARE TESTS THAT MEASURE INTELLIGENCE, ACADEMIC APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT BIASED AGAINST A/PA CHILDREN? WE HAVE TO FIRST DEFINE THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BIAS," AND THEN LOOK AT RECORDS OF A/PA CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE. A TEST CAN BE CONSIDERED "BIASED" AGAINST A SPECIFIC GROUP IF THE SCORES THEY OBTAIN SYSTEMATICALLY UNDER- OR OVER-ESTIMATE THEIR LATER PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL OR ON THE JOB.

I SUBMIT THAT INTELLIGENCE AND SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TESTS ARE QUITE USEFUL IN THE PRACTICAL SENSE FOR PREDICTING FUTURE PERFORMANCE OF A/PAs.

HOWEVER, THERE SEEMS TO BE A DIFFERENCE IN THE DIRECTIONS THAT TEST SCORES PREDICT FUTURE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND SUCCESS IN AN OCCUPATION OR PROFESSION. APTITUDE TESTS HAVE BEEN FOUND TO SLIGHTLY UNDERPREDICT A/PA STUDENTS' SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS AS MEASURED BY GRADE POINT AVERAGES, AND PERHAPS BY RATINGS AND YEARS AND QUALITY OF SCHOOLING AS WELL. HOWEVER, APTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES, GRADES, AND EVEN TEACHERS' RATINGS ALL APPEAR TO OVERESTIMATE A/PAs' LATER OCCUPATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

IN OTHER WORDS, A/PAs DO BETTER IN SCHOOL THAN THEIR TEST SCORES WOULD HAVE PREDICTED, BUT HAVE LOWER LEVEL JOBS AND INCOMES THAN PREDICTED.

WHAT KINDS OF EVIDENCE ARE THESE STATEMENTS BASED UPON? A/PA CHILDREN DO ABOUT AS WELL AS OR A LITTLE BETTER THAN WHITE CHILDREN ON PERFORMANCE TESTS OF INTELLIGENCE AND NONVERBAL PORTIONS OF APTITUDE TESTS. THEY ARE AT A SLIGHT DISADVANTAGE WHEN VERBAL TEST ITEMS ARE IN QUESTION (TABLE 1)

THE FIRST TABLE SUMMARIZES INFORMATION ON YOUNG A/PA CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO THE NORMING GROUP'S. WE CAN SEE THE CHILDREN STUDIED, THE TESTS THAT WERE USED, AND THEIR AVERAGE SCORES IN COMPARISON WITH THE MEANS OF THE NORMING POPULATION'S. OUT OF NINE STUDIES REPORTED. A/PA YOUNGSTERS' SCORES WERE HIGHER IN EIGHT.

THE NEXT TABLE SHOWS APTITUDE AND INTELLIGENCE TEST SCORES OF VARIOUS GROUPS OF A/PA SCHOOL CHILDREN.

TABLE 1

PERFORMANCE OF YOUNG ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN CHILDREN
ON TESTS OF INTELLIGENCE AND DEVELOPED ABILITIES
IN RELATION TO NORMING POPULATIONS

SUBJECTS	TEST	MEAN SCORE[1]	INVESTIGATION/YEARS
ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICANS			
KAUAI JAPANESE 2 YEARS	CATTELL INFANT I.S.	+	WERNER, SIMONIAN & SMITH, 1968
KAUAI HAWAIIANS 2 YEARS	CATTELL INFANT I.S.	≅	" " " " "
KAUAI FILIPINO 2 YEARS	CATTELL INFANT I.S.	-	" " " " "
ORIENTALS GRADE 1	EEO SURVEY:		COLEMAN, 1966
	VERBAL	+	
	NONVERBAL	++	
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES 5-10 YEARS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL	GOODENOUGH'S DAM	++	DELATTE, 1978
CALIFORNIA K-4 'ORIENTALS'	GESELL FIGURE COPYING	+	JENSEN, 1973
CALIFORNIA K-4 'ORIENTALS'	PIAGETIAN TASKS	+ ON AT LEAST HALF OF ITEMS	TUDDENHAM, 1970
ORIENTAL AMERICANS	URBAN INSTITUTE SURVEY*	≅ OR +	SOWELL, 1978

1. ++ SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN STANDARDIZATION MEANS
+ HIGHER THAN STANDARDIZATION MEANS
≅ ABOUT EQUAL TO STANDARDIZATION MEANS
- LOWER THAN STANDARDIZATION MEANS

*SURVEY SUMMARIZES RESULTS OF A NUMBER OF STUDIES.

TABLE 2

Some Recent Aptitude and Intelligence Tests Score Reports of Asian/Pacific American School Children

Subjects	Age/Grade	N	Test	Mean Score	S.D.	Investigator/Date
San Francisco Chinese	4th grade	53	WISC: Verbal	98.6	17.6	Yee & LaForge, 19
			Performance	110.7	18.7	
			Total	104.8	17.5	
Kauai Japanese	10 years	253	PMA	108	12	Werner, Simonian Smith, 1968
Kauai Hawaiian	10 years	180	PMA	99	12	Werner, Simonian Smith, 1968
Kauai Filipino	10 years	138	PMA	101	10	Werner, Simonian Smith, 196[illegible]
Oriental Americans	12th grade	999	EEO Survey:	Mean Scores	10	Coleman, [illegible]66
			Verbal	49.6 (all students $\bar{x}$ = 50)		
			Nonverbal	51.6	10	
Orientals	12th grade	150	Project TALENT Mental Abilities Battery Factor Scores	52 (all students $\bar{x}$ = 50)	10	Backman, 1972
California Asian Americans	2 - 6th Grade	478	Lorge Thorndike Stanford Achievement Figure Copying	Factor Score 0.5 (all students $\bar{x}$ = 0)	1	Jensen & Inouye,
Oriental Candidates	12th grade	10,098	SAT: Verbal	442 (White candidates $\bar{x}$ = 474)	100	The College Board 1972
			Quantitative	517 (White candidates $\bar{x}$ = 505)		

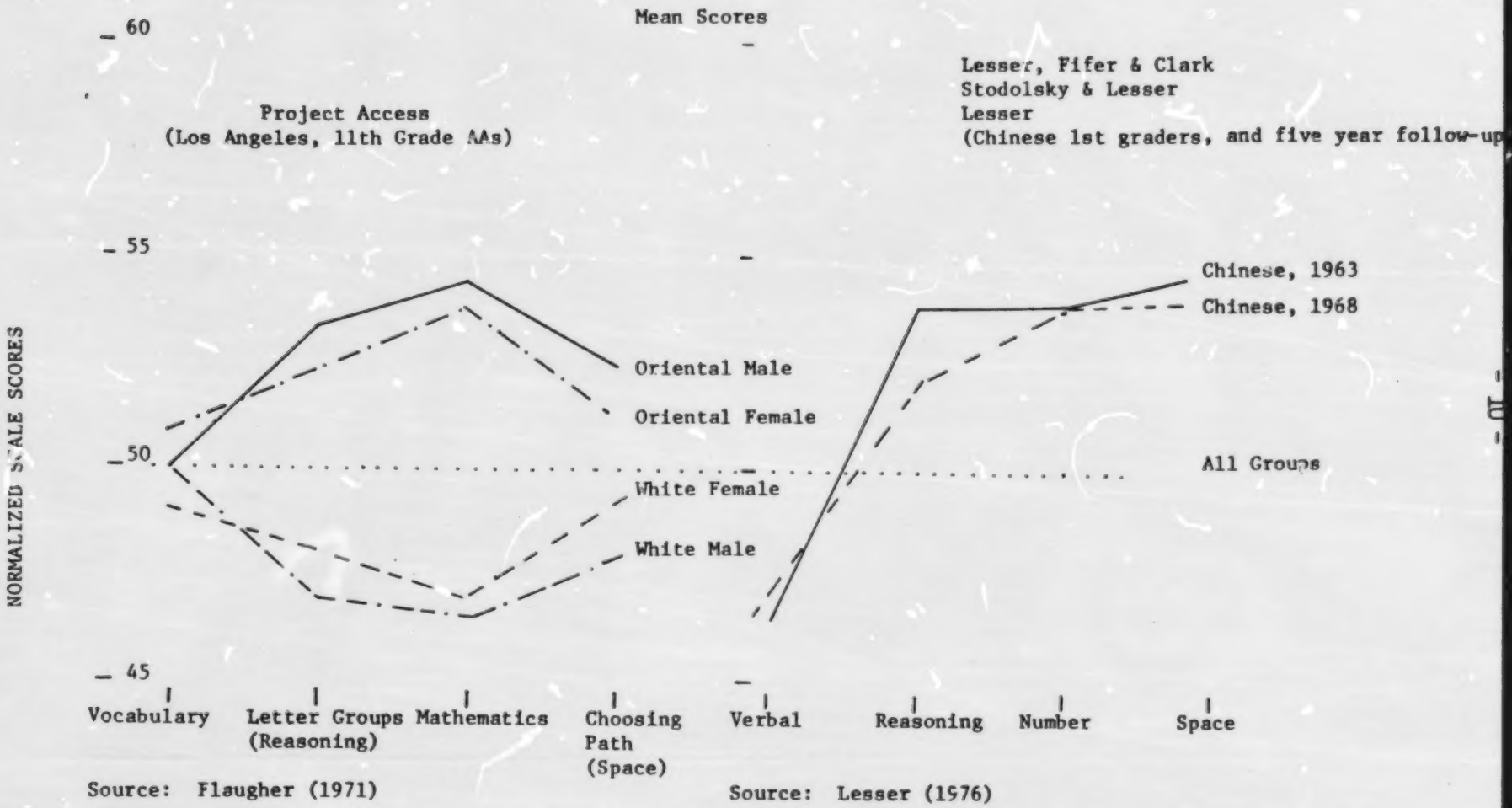
Again, we can see that among all subjects studied, the average score is very close to that of the norming population or the majority. Some of the slight variations among A/PAs can be explained by SES differences among groups.

Many studies have shown that levels of test performance are related to SES. But the patterns of cognitive test performance seem to be distinctive for A/PAs. Three studies, done at different times, on different groups of pupils, show very similar patterns of A/PA test performance.

Lesser and his colleagues studied Chinese first graders in Boston and New York, and followed them up five years later. The children's patterns of average performance with an interval of five years of schooling, remained very similar. Project ACCESS studied Los Angeles 11th graders. Those who identified themselves as Orientals showed a very similar pattern. Figure 1 shows the Lesser and ACCESS patterns -- slightly below average or a dip in verbal scores, and above average performance in numbers, reasoning and spatial relations.

Figure 1

Comparisons of Patterns of Test Performance of Asian American Children from Grades 1, 6, and 11 with Majority and Total Performance



SIMILAR PATTERNS OF TEST BEHAVIOR WERE SHOWN BY A/PA HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS WHO WERE STUDIED IN PROJECT TALENT.

WHAT KIND OF SCHOOLWORK WOULD WE EXPECT, GIVEN WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT A/PAs' LEVELS AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPED COGNITIVE ABILITIES? THE TYPICAL A/PA STUDENT SHOULD BE ABOVE AVERAGE IN MATHEMATICS, TECHNOLOGICAL AND SCIENCE SUBJECTS, AND WOULD HAVE TO WORK HARDER TO DO WELL IN SUBJECTS THAT REQUIRE COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS -- RHETORIC, SOCIAL SCIENCES, DRAMA AND THE LIKE.

THAT'S PRETTY MUCH THE WAY IT IS, EXCEPT THAT A/PAs DO QUITE WELL IN THE MECHANICS OF ENGLISH, WHICH CAN BE LEARNED IN SCHOOL.

FURTHERMORE, A/PAs AT ALL LEVELS RECEIVE AVERAGE GRADES THAT ARE SOMEWHAT HIGHER THAN THEIR WHITE CLASSMATES. BUT THEIR SPREAD IS GREATER. IN FACT, THE SCORES SEEM TO FALL INTO TWO FAIRLY DISTINCTIVE ACHIEVEMENT CLUSTERS, AS SHOWN IN TABLE 3. IN THE COLEMAN STUDY, REANALYZED BY MAYESKE AND BEATON, BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT BACKGROUND FACTORS SUCH AS SES, THE LOWER HALF OF A/PAs ARE SHOWN TO DO LESS WELL THAN WHITE STUDENTS IN COMPOSITE ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES.

IN THE UPPER HALF OF THE DISTRIBUTION, THEY DO CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN WHITE CLASSMATES.

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF ORIENTAL AMERICANS EXCEEDING WHITES' SELECTED PERCENTILE POINTS, BEFORE AND AFTER ADJUSTMENT FOR SOCIAL BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

ETHNIC GROUP	BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER
WHITE	90	90	75	75	50	50	25	25	10	10
ORIENTAL AMERICANS	80	87	64	72	48	51	21	30	9	15
PERCENTILE	TENTH		TWENTY-FIFTH		FIFTIETH		SEVENTY-FIFTH		NINETIETH	

Source: Mayeske, G. and Beaton, A. Special Studies of Our Nation's Students, HEW, Office of Education, DHEW Publication No. (OE) 72-131, Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973.

Some of this bimodality among A/PAs can probably be attributed to socioeconomic differences, but this table took SES into account. Other factors also influence achievement in school. Culture is one. Patterns of culture among A/PA subgroups are not by any means the same. Differences show up in interpersonal relations and child rearing practices, which in turn can affect achievement motivation.

Gender definitely influences achievement. Different cultures treat boys and girls differently. The American school experience itself seems to be a primary agent for differential achievement between boys and girls. Like other Americans, differences are not great when A/PA children first enter school. In the early years, girls do better in school. By high school, however, differences in curricular choices are clear. And girls' achievement test scores, especially in mathematics and physical sciences, begin to lag behind. Girls continue to be better in spelling and the mechanics of language, but not necessarily in verbal comprehension.

THE NUMBER OF YEARS OF SCHOOL ASPIRED TO AND ACHIEVED ALSO DIFFERS BETWEEN A/PA BOYS AND GIRLS. THE BOYS USUALLY HAVE HIGHER ASPIRATIONS. THE ONLY SUBGROUP WHICH SHOWS CONSISTENTLY HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT AMONG FEMALES WAS THE FILIPINA.

ASSIMILATION, OR DEGREES OF ACCULTURATION TO AMERICAN VALUES AND PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR, ALSO SEEMS TO BEAR A RELATIONSHIP TO ACHIEVEMENT -- BUT IT IS NOT A STRAIGHTFORD LINEAR RELATIONSHIP. IN LOOKING AT A NUMBER OF CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES, IT WOULD SEEM THAT SOME ACCULTURATION TO AMERICAN SOCIETY IS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVEMENT. HOWEVER, A DEGREE OF ALIENATION FROM THE MAINSTREAM IS NOT INIMICAL TO THE INTERESTS OF ACHIEVEMENT, AT LEAST AMONG A/PAS WHO HOLD ANCIENT CULTURAL VALUES. FOR A/PAS WHO HAVE HISTORICALLY REVERED TRADITIONAL SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES, SOME LACK OF ACCULTURATION SEEMS TO HELP ACHIEVEMENT. TOTAL ASSIMILATION, WHICH HAS BEEN STUDIED AMONG CALIFORNIA SANSEI, APPEARS TO ALSO MEAN TOTALLY AVERAGE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AS WELL.

FINALLY, WHILE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS THE SINE QUA NON FOR VERBAL ACHIEVEMENT, BILINGUALISM PER SE IS NOT A DETERRENT TO HIGH ACHIEVEMENT.

CALIFORNIA STUDENTS FLUENT IN ENGLISH AS WELL AS AN ASIAN LANGUAGE DO BETTER THAN THEIR WHITE CLASSMATES. BILINGUAL A/PAs WHOSE ENGLISH IS LIMITED, HOWEVER, HAVE TROUBLE WITH LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING, WRITING AND UNDERSTANING, EVEN THOUGH SOME MIGHT DO QUITE WELL IN MATH, IF THEY CAME FROM ASIAN SCHOOLS WHICH EMPHASIZE MATHEMATICS.

GRADES ARE, OF COURSE, A KIND OF TEACHERS' RATINGS. BUT OVER AND BEYOND GOOD GRADES, TEACHERS ENJOY WORKING WITH A/PA PUPILS.

EACH NEW GROUP OF YOUNG ASIAN IMMIGRANTS: CHINESE, JAPANESE, KOREANS, VIETNAMESE, AND HMONGS, HAVE IN THEIR TURN BEEN PRAISED BY TEACHERS FOR THEIR SILENCE, OBEDIENCE, DILIGENCE AND RESPECT FOR ADULTS. THIS A/PA REPUTATION FOR BEING TEACHERS' PETS CAN BE SEEN AS A GOOD THING OR BAD. IT'S GOOD BECAUSE STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF A/PAs BENEFIT PARTICULARLY FROM SUPPORTIVE, HIGHLY VERBAL FEMALE TEACHERS. IT CAN BE BAD BECAUSE THE FAVORITISM SHOWN TO A/PA KIDS CAN SOMETIMES BE, THROUGH INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS, MADE AT THE EXPENSE OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH OTHER MINORITY GROUPS.

EVEN WORSE, THE VERY QUALITIES THAT ENDEAR A LITTLE A/PA CHILD TO THE TEACHERS, AND PERHAPS GET A YOUNG PERSON HIS OR HER ENTRY LEVEL JOB, WILL WORK AGAINST THEM AS THEY BEGIN THE CLIMB UP A CAREER LADDER.

GOOD GRADES, HIGH TEST SCORES AND FINE TEACHERS' RECOMMENDATIONS ARE THREE MAJOR CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO SELECTIVE COLLEGES AND UNVIVERSITIES. INDEED, MOST A/PAS, WITHOUT LANGUAGE HANDICAPS, DO GET INTO COLLEGE. ACCORDING TO THE 1970 CENSUS, MORE CHINESE AND JAPANESE ARE ENROLLED IN COLLEGE THAN ANY OTHER AMERICANS.

FILIPINO AND HAWAIIAN AMERICANS SEND SOMEWHAT LOWER PROPORTIONS THAN AVERAGE. CALIFORNIA AND HAWAII ARE THE TWO STATE SYSTEMS WITH THE GREATEST PROPORTION OF ASIANS AND ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS. THE APRIL 9TH NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT A/PAS WHO CONSTITUTE 5.2% OF CALIFORNIA POPULATION, ARE 8.8% OF THE STUDENTS IN STANFORD, 15.6% AT UCLA AND 20% AT BERKELEY. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ADMINISTRATORS SEE THIS OVERREPRESENTATION OF A/PAS AS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL OTHER GROUPS.

By state law, any California high school graduate from the top 12.5% of his or her class can go to one of the seven state university campuses. 39% of graduating A/PAs were in the top 12.5% of their classes -- as compared with 16.5% of Whites. Vice Chancellor Park of Berkeley blames the high proportion of A/PAs to, quote, "a cultural fixation on education's advantages, powerful family structure, and a national immigration policy that favors the professional class, whose members tend to push children in the university."

Furthermore, the A/PA presence is particularly noticeable, because they cluster in four departments -- Engineering, computer sciences, business administration and micro-economics. Dean Laetsch of Berkeley explained that lack of proficiency in English prevents many A/PAs from majoring in the humanities and social sciences.

Now some A/PAs might claim that they want to maximize their educational and career opportunities by studying subjects they have excelled in. And there is logic to their argument.

BUT THE FACT IS, EXCEPT WHERE ADMISSION IS REGULATED BY LAW, ADMISSION DECISIONS HAVE CONSIDERABLE LATITUDE AND ADMISSIONS OFFICERS EXERCISE THEIR FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND OTHER KINDS OF BALANCE IN EACH CLASS. THUS, A/PAs OFTEN COMPETE ONLY AGAINST THEMSELVES.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE. LOTS OF A/PAs WANT TO GO TO MEDICAL SCHOOL, SO COMPETITION IS KEEN. A/PAs ARE OVER-REPRESENTED AMONG MDs. IN 1975-76, 31.7% OF ORIENTAL/ASIAN AMERICAN APPLICANTS WERE ACCEPTED, WHILE 37.2% OF WHITE APPLICANTS WERE ACCEPTED. FURTHERMORE, THE ACCEPTED A/PA REPORTED AVERAGE VERBAL SCORES OF 573 WERE 11 POINTS LOWER THAN THE WHITES'; BUT QUANTITATIVE SCORES OF 654 WERE 25 POINTS HIGHER THAN THE WHITES'. THEY ALSO HAD SLIGHTLY HIGHER GPAs. LAW, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS NOT BEEN A POPULAR PROFESSION AMONG A/PAs. A/PAs ARE UNDER-REPRESENTED AMONG LAWYERS, SO IT IS EASIER TO GET INTO LAW SCHOOL. 75% OF A/PA CANDIDATES WITH LSAT SCORES EQUAL OR HIGHER THAN 450 RECEIVED AT LEAST ONE OFFER OF ADMISSION TO AN LSDAS-ABA LAW SCHOOL IN THAT SAME YEAR. BUT ONLY 65% OF THE WHITE CANDIDATES WITH THE SAME SCORE RANGES WERE ACCEPTED.

So you can see, it is relatively easier to get into fields where competition from fellow A/PAs is less.

In view of all these heartening testing and schooling data, some people might be wondering why we aren't running the country. And we know we're not. There are some exceptions — Employers look for high abilities in communications, aggressiveness, decisiveness and willingness to question authority in making promotions and hiring for higher level positions. These are qualities which are diametric opposites of the characteristics which endear A/PAs to teachers.

Putting aside the oldest and newest immigrants, and looking just at the native born, educated A/PAs, we still have documented evidence that the proportion of us working in high level white collar jobs has not kept up with the escalating numbers who are college educated. Furthermore, the income of professional A/PAs is lower than their levels and quality of education would warrant.

As educators, what are some things that we can do to prevent the aura of blighted promise that seems to be hovering over the lives of A/PAs?

WE'LL HAVE TO BE ACTIVE INTERVENISTS AS EDUCATORS.

FIRST, WE CAN INSIST ON PROVIDING THE KIND OF EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE FOR OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL A/PAs.

1. FOR NEWCOMERS, PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING THEM UNDERSTANDING OF ENGLISH, THE ABILITY TO READ COMFORTABLY IN THEIR NEW LANGUAGE WITHOUT SACRIFICING THEIR MOTHER TONGUES, AND ABOVE ALL -- THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE -- TO SPEAK ENGLISH WITH FLUENCY AND FORCE, ARGUE A POINT OF VIEW IF NECESSARY, AND TO WRITE WELL ENOUGH TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE'S HEARTS AND MINDS, SO WE CAN RIGHT PERCEIVED WRONGS.

2. ALL A/PA CHILDREN, BUT ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGES, NEED SPECIAL PROGRAMS TO HONE THEIR VERBAL SKILLS. THE ONLY WAY TO GAIN FLUENCY AND FLEXIBILITY IN VERBAL PRODUCTION IS BY CONSTANT PRACTICE. FROM THE EARLIEST YEARS, WE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGING OUR YOUNGSTERS TO ENTER POETRY AND PROSE COMPETITIONS, JOIN THE DEBATE OR DRAMA CLUB AND TALK, TALK, TALK. THEY SHOULD LEARN EARLY TO READ, AND THEN TALK AND WRITE ABOUT WHAT THEY READ.

3. WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR WAYS OF MOTIVATING OUR CHILDREN TO ACHIEVEMENT NOT ONLY IN ACADEMIC, BUT IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, BECAUSE THE LATTER OFTEN LEAD TO LIFETIME INTERESTS AND CAREERS. FOR CHILDREN WHO WORK BEST IN GROUPS, TEACHING MIGHT BE BUILT UPON MORE SMALL GROUP WORK. FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE PASSIVE, ARTFUL INTERVENTIONS MUST BE DEVISED TO LURE THEM INTO A MORE ACTIVE, SOCIAL WAY OF PARTICIPATION. THE COMING GENERATIONS SHOULD HAVE THE INTEREST, TALENT AND TRAINING TO ENTER ANY FIELDS OF STUDY OR WORK THAT THEY WANT.

4. WE CAN BE ENCOURAGING THOSE OF OUR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT BOOK-MINDED, BUT INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH THEIR HANDS, TO EXPLORE THEIR POTENTIAL IN VARIOUS CAREERS. A/PAs' PERFORMANCE TEST SCORES ARE HIGHER THAN AVERAGE, REMEMBER? AND TEST SCORES IN PERCEPTUAL SPEED AND ACCURACY, SPATIAL RELATIONS AND FINGER DEXTERITY ALSO INDICATE POTENTIAL FOR SKILLED WORK WITH HANDS. INDEED, SKILLED AND SEMI-SKILLED BLUE COLLAR A/PA WORKERS EARN ON THE AVERAGE MORE THAN OTHER AMERICAN BLUE COLLAR GROUPS.

THEN, WE OURSELVES NEED TO CHANGE:

5. WE SHOULD BE DOING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON TEACHING METHODS THAT WOULD IMPROVE VERBAL ABILITY WITHOUT SACRIFICING OUR GIFT FOR NUMBERS. A/PA CHILDREN'S TEST SCORES HAVE BEEN DROPPING, ALONG WITH THEIR PEERS'. SCHOOL AS WELL AS HOME CONDITIONS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SCORE DROPS, EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW THAT THE BROADENING OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCLUDE MORE A/PAs MAY ALSO ENTER INTO THE PICTURE.

6. MORE OF US SHOULD BE IN EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLING AND RELATED PROFESSIONS, BECAUSE WE ARE SADLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN THESE IMPORTANT HELPING PROFESSIONS. A/PA STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS, MORE THAN ANY OTHER GROUPS, ARE ASKING FOR ASSISTANCE IN PERSONAL, SCHOOL AND CAREER DECISIONS.

7. WE SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO BRING THE STRONG SCHOLARLY TRADITIONS OF OUR A/PA HERITAGE INTO A COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIP TO THE STANDARD AMERICAN CURRICULUM FOR OUR CHILDREN, BECAUSE WE KNOW SUCH TRADITIONS FOSTER HIGHER ASPIRATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENT.

8. WE SHOULD STOP HIDING OUR LIGHT UNDER A BUSHEL. WHERE WE EXCEL, WE SHOULD BE PROUD.

WE SHOULD BE HELPING EACH OTHER ACHIEVE MORE, INSTEAD OF APOLOGIZING FOR OUR COMPETENCE, OR LETTING OTHERS APOLOGIZE FOR US.

9. ALL OF US SHOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE, TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED AMONG THOSE WHO WILL SPEAK OUT FOR FAIRNESS IN EDUCATION AND ON THE JOB.

FINALLY,

10. WE MUST REFUSE TO PLAY THE NUMBERS GAME. IT'S UP TO EACH OF US TO MAKE A STRONG CASE THAT A/PAs, AS A MINI-MINORITY GROUP, CAN MAKE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICA'S FUTURE.

AND WE THEREFORE DESERVE TO BE JUDGED ON THE BASES OF OUR ASPIRATIONS, ABILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS, AND NOT ON OUR CENSUS COUNT.

THANK YOU.